

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TUNIS 01039 01 OF 03 131251Z

45

ACTION OES-05

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-11 SS-15 NSC-05 AID-05 HEW-02

AGR-05 SP-02 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 EB-07 /075 W

----- 070256

R 131111Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1684

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 TUNIS 1039

FOR : INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE ON POPULATION POLICY

FROM: AMBASSADOR

E.O.: 11652: GDS

TAGS: SPOP, TS

SUBJ: IMPLICATIONS OF WORLDWIDE POPULATION GROWTH FOR

U.S. SECURITY AND OVERSEAS INTERESTS

REF : 75 STATE 201427

1. I WELCOME THE OPPORTUNITY TO RESPOND TO BASIC QUESTIONS
RAISED IN REFTL. SURVEYING LONG LIST OF ADDRESSEES, WE HAVE
ASKED OURSELVES WHAT WE CAN CONTRIBUTE FROM TUNIS VANTAGE
POINT THAT WOULD BE MOST USEFUL TO INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE
CONSIDERATION OF IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S. SECURITY OF WORLDWIDE
POPULATION GROWTH. MESSAGE ANNOUNCING PRESIDENTIAL DECISION
TO UNDERTAKE FUNDAMENTAL REVIEW OF WORLD POPULATION SITUATION
(75 STATE 297241) POINTED OUT THAT NEARLY HALF OF TOTAL LDC
POPULATION GROWTH CONCENTRATED IN 13 LARGE COUNTRIES. SUCCESS
OR FAILURE OF TUNISIA IN CONTROLLING POPULATION NOW NUMBERING
5.5 MILLION OBVIOUSLY NOT CRITICAL OT AVOIDING WORLDWIDE
POPULATION CATASTROPHE (ALTHOUGH IT WILL BE CRUCIAL TO
TUNISIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNAL SECURITY).
IN ATTACKING THE LARGER PROBLEMS, HOWEVER, WE ARE OBVIOUSLY
IN NEED OF MODELS. IN THIS RESPECT TUNISIAN MODEL MAY BE MORE
IMPORTANT THAN SIZE ALONE WOULD SUGGEST. A POSSIBLE CASE
COULD BE MADE THAT IF POPULATION GROWTH CANNOT BE CHECKED
IN TUNISIA, PROSPECTS ARE DIM ANYWHERE IN ARAB WORLD. AGAINST
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 TUNIS 01039 01 OF 03 131251Z

THIS BACKGROUND, I WOULD LIKE TO ADDRESS SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

RAISED IN REFTEL.

A. HOST COUNTRY'S BASIC POPULATION POLICY:

(1) PERHAPS MORE THAN ANY OTHER ARAB COUNTRY, TUNISIA HAS FOLLOWED A CONSISTENT POLICY OF CONFRONTING POPULATION PROBLEM HEAD-ON. SINCE INDEPENDENCE IN 1956, PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA HAS PERSONALLY LED THE CAMPAIGN FOR BIRTH CONTROL. USE OF CONTRACEPTIVES AND SURGICAL PROCEDURES ARE PROMOTED THROUGH NATIONAL CAMPAIGNS, ABORTIONS FOR WOMEN WITH MORE THAN FIVE LIVING CHILDREN HAVE BEEN LEGALIZED, AND A NETWORK OF HEALTH CENTERS AND DISPENSARIES ESTABLISHED THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. FURTHERMORE, THESE STEPS HAVE BEEN TAKEN IN CONJUNCTION WITH MEASURES TO LIBERALIZE STATUS OF WOMEN THAT GO BEYOND THOSE IN ANY OTHER ARAB COUNTRY. PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA HAS NOT LESSENED HIS SUPPORT FOR BIRTH CONTROL, WHICH MOST CLEARLY ENUNCIATED IN MAJOR SPEECH IN 1966. A FAMILY PLANNING AND POPULATION OFFICE WAS CREATED IN EARLY 1967 AND GIVEN GREATER AUTONOMY WITHIN THE MINISTRY OF PUBLIC HEALTH IN 1973. MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE OFFICE ARE TO EXPAND FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES AND EDUCATION, UNDERTAKE RESEARCH, COLLABORATE WITH THE MEDICAL PROFESSION, GIVE GUIDANCE TO REGIONAL HOSPITALS, AND MAINTAIN LIAISON WITH PRIVATE AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS ENGAGED IN FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAMS. IN THE LAST DECADE, THE CRUDE BIRTH RATE IN TUNISIA HAS FALLEN STEADILY FROM 47 PER THOUSAND TO 36 PER THOUSAND. FINALLY, ON THE POSITIVE SIDE, THE USG, INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND PRIVATE GROUPS HAVE DEVOTED CONSIDERABLE EFFORT TO ASSISTING TUNISIA PRECISELY BECAUSE THERE SEEMED TO BE CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH IT COULD BE DEMONSTRATED THAT FAMILY PLANNING COULD BE MADE TO WORK IN A MOSLEM LDC.

(2) THE QUESTION NEVERTHELESS REAMINS WHETHER NEGATIVE FACTORS WILL NOT PREVENT TUNISIA FROM PUSHING DOWN THE GROWTH RATE TO ITS ULTIMATE GOAL OF 1.2 PERCENT. EVEN IF STATISTICS ARE ACCURATE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 TUNIS 01039 01 OF 03 131251Z

AND THE PRESENT RATE OF GORWTH IS ONLY 2.3 PERCENT, AT THAT RATE TUNISIA'S POPULATION WILL CONSIDERABLEY MORE THAN DOUBLE BY THE END OF THE CENTURY. NEGATIVE FACTORS ARE BOTH SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND ATTITUDINAL. TWENTY YEARS AFTER INDEPENDENCE, TUNISIA HAS STILL MADE LITTLE PROGRESS IN GETTING THE MEDICAL PROFESSION OUT OF THE CAPITAL AND INTO THE COUNTRYSIDE; AND EVEN TODAY, GOT IS DEPENDENT ON BULGARIAN AND

CHINESE DOCTORS IN VARIOUS RURAL AREAS. MANY
TUNISIAN DOCTORS WHO ARE FRENCH TRAINED AND ORIENTED
REFLECT ATTITUDES OF THE FRENCH MEDICAL PROFESSION
TOWARD FAMILY PLANNING. ORAL CONTRACEPTIVES ARE
DISPENSED BY PRESCRIPTION ONLY, RESTRICTING DISTRIBUTION
THROUGH PARA-MEDICS AND NON-CLINICAL OUTLETS. A
POPULATION SAFETY VALVE EXISTS THROUGH EMPLOYMENT
OPPORTUNITIES FOR TUNISIAN WORKERS ABROAD, PARTICULARLY
IN FRANCE AND LIBYA, A SAFETY VALVE WHICH, IN THE
CASE OF FRANCE, IS SLOWLY BEING SHUT OFF. IN THE
CASE OF LIBYA IT COULD BE CLOSED OVERNIGHT. THE
RATHER INTENSE INTERNATIONAL INTEREST IN HELPING
TUNISIA WITH ITS POPULATION PROBLEM MAY HAE CREATED
AN ATMOSPHERE OF COMPLACENCY (WHICH HAS IN ANY
CASE BEEN SOMETHING OF A POST-INDEPENDENCE TRAIT
HERE). TUNISIA HAS NOT GONE THROUGH THE JARRING
EXPERIENCES OF MOST OF THE REST OF NORTH AFRICA, AND
WHILE THE COUNTRY IS STILL BY NO MEANS WELL OFF, IT
IS DOING RATHER WELL IN COMPARISION WITH MOST LDC'S.
THE QUESTION, THEN, IS WILL TUNISIA TAKE THE NECESSARY
SELF-HELP MEASURES, PARTICULARLY IN THE RURAL AREAS,
TO ACHIEVE THE RESULTS REQUIRED?

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TUNIS 01039 02 OF 03 131306Z

45

ACTION OES-05

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-11 SS-15 NSC-05 AID-05 HEW-02

AGR-05 SP-02 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 EB-07 /075 W

----- 070670

R 131111Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1685

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 3 TUNIS 1039

FOR : INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE ON POPULATION POLICY

FROM: AMBASSADOR

B. COST EFFECTIVENESS OF HOST COUNTRY POPULATION PROGRAM:

THIS, OF COURSE, IS A MOST DIFFICULT QUESTION TO ANSWER, SINCE EVEN IN PROFESSIONAL CIRCLES I GATHER THERE IS CONSIDERABLE DEBATE ABOUT THE MOST COST EFFECTIVE METHOD OF CONTROLLING POPULATION GROWTH. THE USG THROUGH AID HAS HAD CONSIDERABLE EXPERIENCE HERE IN THE FAMILY PLANNING AREA; AND IN THE PAST THE AID PROGRAM HAS CONCENTRATED ON DEVELOPING ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY WITHIN THE TUNISIAN FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM WITHOUT BECOMING WEDDED TO ANY SPECIFIC METHOD OF BIRTH CONTROL AT THE EXPENSE OF OTHER APPROACHES. AREAS WHICH CONTINUE TO RECEIVE ATTENTION ARE: BETTER USE OF THE SERVICES OF MIDWIVES; UPGRADING OF RURAL DISPENSARIES AND FAMILY PLANNING FACILITIES; A GREATER COMMITMENT TO COUNTRYWIDE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS; ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMMUNITY-BASED CONTRACEPTIVE DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM CAPABLE OF REACHING THE REMOTEST AREAS OF TUNISIA; AND GREATER IN-COUNTRY TRAINING OF MEDICAL AND PARAMEDICAL PERSONNEL.

C. IMPACT OF POPULATION GROWTH ON NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

THE EFFECT OF CONTINUING POPULATION GROWTH
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 TUNIS 01039 02 OF 03 131306Z

AT THE PRESENT RATE ON A SMALL COUNTRY LACKING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES BUT BEGINNING TO GET USED THE GOOD THINGS OF LIFE, AND WITH CLOSE TIES TO EUROPE CULTURALLY, COULD OBVIOUSLY BE GRAVE, PARTICULARLY SINCE MUCH OF TUNISIA'S AGRICULTURAL LAND IS MARGINAL AND THE NEED FOR IMPORTED GRAIN CAN FLUCTUATE WIDELY WITH MINOR CHANGES IN THE WEATHER PATTERN.

D. IMPACT OF POPULATION GROWTH ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

AS IN MANY OTHER COUNTRIES, THE TREND IS MIGRATION TO THE CAPITAL (AND THROUGH THE CAPITAL TO EUROPE). NEARLY A MILLION TUNISIANS NOW LIVE IN TUNIS OUT OF A TOTAL POPULATION OF 5.5 MILLION. THERE IS NO INDICATION MOVEMENT TO TUNIS IS BEING CHECKED, BUT SO FAR THE STRAIN ON URBAN SERVICES IS NOT INTOLERABLE. EFFORTS BY AID AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN THE FIELD OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT CAN HAVE A POSITIVE EFFECT AND BY PROMOTING RURAL PROSPERITY MAY CONTRIBUTE TO CHECKING POPULATION GROWTH PROVIDED, OF COURSE, THAT FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES MARCH WITH PROSPERITY INTO REMOTE RURAL AREAS.

E. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF POPULATION GROWTH:

UNCHECKED POPULATION GROWTH IN TUNISIA WILL THWART RURAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS AND ENGENDER DESPARATE MEASURES TO EXPAND FOOD PRODUCTION. THE EFFECT OF SUCH MEASURES ON MARGINAL LAND ARE QUITE PREDICTABLE. YOUNG TREES WILL GO FOR FIREWOOD OR WILL BE GRAZED BY ANIMALS, OVERCULTIVATION WILL LEAD TO FURTHER DEGRADATION OF TUNISIA'S ALREADY IMPROVERISHED SOIL, AND THIS WILL BE FOLLOWED BY GREATER EROSION, FLOODS, AND A FURTHER DELCINE IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY.

F. POSSIBLE POLITICAL AND STRATEGIC CONSEQUENCES OF ANTICIPATED POPULATION GROWTH:

TUNISIA IS SANDWICHED BETWEEN TWO LARGE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 TUNIS 01039 02 OF 03 131306Z

REVOLUTIONARY STATES AND REALIZES THAT EVEN THROUGH ITS RELATIVE PROSPERITY, TRANQUILLITY AND PRO-WESTERN STANCE MAY ANNOY LIBYA AND ALERIA, MILITARY ACTION AGAINST TUNISIA IS NOT A PRIMARY THREAT. SUBVERSION FROM ALGERIA OR LIBYA IS A THREAT AND ONE THAT WILL INCREASE DRAMATICALLY IF POPULATION GROWTH LEADS TO REDUCED STANDARD OF LIVING AND CIVIL UNREST. THERE IS RELATIVE SAFETY FOR TUNISIA IN PROSPERITY, WHICH OBVIOUSLY IS VERY MUCH DEPENDENT ON POPULATION CONTROL.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TUNIS 01039 03 OF 03 131257Z

45

ACTION OES-05

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-11 SS-15 NSC-05 AID-05 HEW-02

AGR-05 SP-02 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 EB-07 /075 W

----- 070355

R 131111Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1686

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 3 OF 3 TUNIS 1039

FOR : INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE ON POPULATION POLICY
FROM: AMBASSADOR

G. HOW CAN WE COOPERATE WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS,
OTHER DONOR COUNTRIES AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS
IN SUPPORT OF POPULATION PROGRAMS?:

IN ADDITION TO SUPPORT FROM AID, TUNISIA IS
RECEIVING ASSISTANCE FROM UNESCO, FAO, ILO, WHO, UNICEF,
THE UNFPA, THE IBRD/IDA, AND SOME WESTERN EUROPEAN
GOVERNMENTS. THE USG IS COOPERATING WITH THE IBRD/IDA
IN PROVIDING LOCAL CURRENCY COSTS TO MATERNITY CENTER
CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS. TWO PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS
ARE ALOS AT WORK HERE: PROJECT HOPE AND IPPF. THE
UN SPECIALIZED AGENCIES OBVIOUSLY PLAY A LARGE ROLE
IN TUNISIA. I BELIEVE THAT COORDINATION AMONG DONORS
CAN BEST BE ACHIEVED AT THE LOCAL LEVEL, AND I HAVE
SUGGESTED TO THE UN RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE THAT
WE INITIATE A SERIES OF INFORMAL MEETINGS TO EXPLORE
WAYS IN WHICH AID CAN BE COORDINATED. THIS MUST
BE DONE CAREFULLY, AS THE TUNISIAN GOVERNMENT HAS
SERIOUS MISGIVINGS ABOUT UNCONTROLLED COORDINATION
AMONG DONORS, BUT I BELIEVE THAT DONOR CONSULTATION
WOULD BE PARTICULARLY USEFUL IN MOVING TUNISIA IN
THE RIGHT DIRECTION ON THE POPULATION QUESTION. A
HOPEFUL SIGN IN THIS REGARD IS THAT THE GOT IS
SPONSORING A COORDINATING MEETING WITH AID AND THE
UN AGENCIES AT THE END OF THIS MONTH.
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 TUNIS 01039 03 OF 03 131257Z

H. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR U.S. ACTIONS IN POPULATION FIELD:

I THINK THAT OUR EFFORTS IN TUNISIA ARE BASICALLY
ON THE RIGHT TRACK. FUNDING PROVIDED THROUGH AID IS
ADEQUATE, AND WE RECOGNIZE THAT WE CANNOT DISCHARGE
OUR OBLIGATIONS THROUGH MATERIAL HELP ALONE. OUR
PRIMARY AIM AT THIS POINT SHOULD BE TO HELP THE
TUNISIAN FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM TO ACHIEVE SELF-
SUFFICIENCY. THIS WILL REQUIRE NOT ONLY THE BEST
EFFORTS AND HIGHEST PRIORITY WITHIN USAID; IT WILL
REQUIRE A DEMONSTRATION BY THE ENTIRE U.S. MISSION
OF THE SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH WE VIEW THE POPULATION
PROBLEM. THE TUNISIAN GOVERNMENT IS AWARE OF THE
DIMENSIONS OF THE PROBLEM. THE U.S. GOVERNMENT, IN

CONJUNCTION WITH OTHER DONORS, CAN DO MUCH TO
MAINTAIN TUNISIAN RESOLVE TO LICK THE PROBLEM BY
TRANSMITTING OUR SERIOUSNESS AND ENTHUSIASM, BY
GIVING OUR BEST THOUGHT AND ADVICE ON POPULATION
MATTERS, AND BY PROVIDING MATERIAL AND TECHNICAL
ASSISTANCE WHERE IT IS CRUCIAL AND WHERE WE MOST
NEED TO DEMONSTRATE OUR COMMITMENT. IN THE IMMEDIATE
FUTURE (I.E., AFTER 1978) THE MOST LOGICAL ASSISTANCE
THROUGH AID WOULD BE (1) TO ASSURE THE ESTABLISHMENT
OF THE APPROPRIATE INFRASTRUCTURE FOR EFFECTIVELY
REACHING THE TOTAL POPULATION, AND PARTICULARLY THE
RURAL POOR, AND (2) TO ASSURE TEMPORARILY (OVER A
THREE TO FIVE YEAR PERIOD) AN ADEQUATE SUPPLY OF
PILLS AND CONDOMS.
SEELYE

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SECURITY, POPULATION, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: RowellE0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976TUNIS01039
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760055-0748
From: TUNIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760248/aaaabqay.tel
Line Count: 346
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION OES
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 7
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 STATE 201427
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: RowellE0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <22 APR 2004 by greeneet>; APPROVED <26 OCT 2004 by RowellE0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: IMPLICATIONS OF WORLDWIDE POPULATION GROWTH FOR U.S. SECURITY AND OVERSEAS INTERESTS
TAGS: SPOP, TS, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006